

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 CONAKR 01044 311640Z

ACTION INR-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 IO-13 ARA-10 EUR-12 SP-02
PM-05 SS-15 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00
/078 W

-----023843 311647Z /72

O 311615Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4363

S E C R E T CONAKRY 1044

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PEPR, MPOL, GV, XA, CU, UR

SUBJECT: SOVIET AND CUBAN ROLE IN AFRICA

REF: STATE 134913

1. ALTHOUGH GUINEA REMAINS RHETORICALLY COMMITTED TO "THE WORLD REVOLUTION", "SOCIALISM", AND IS IN BASIC IDEOLOGICAL SYMPATHY WITH MOST OF AFRICA'S RADICAL REGIMES, SEKOU TOURE EVIDENTLY HAS SOME RESERVATIONS ABOUT SOVIET ROLE IN AFRICA. HE IS PRIVATELY DISILLUSIONED WITH SOVIETS' PERFORMANCE IN AIDING GUINEA'S DEVELOPMENT AND REGARDS THEM WITH SKEPTICISM, SEEING THEM AS SHLFISHLY PURSUING OWN GREAT-POWER INTERESTS. ATTENDANT PROBLEMS COULD BE CREATION OF A KIND OF EXPLOITATIVE NEO-COLONIALISM AND INVOLVEMENT OF AFRICAN STATES IN SITUATIONS NOT NECES- SARILY BENEFICIAL TO THEM, E.G., ZAMBIA AND SHABA. PRESCRIPTION FOR HANDLING SUCH PROBLEMS WOULD BE TO HOLD SOVIETS OFF MORE AT ARM'S LENGTH AND ENCOURAGE OTHER AFRICANS TO DO MORE TO HELP THEMSELVES, IF NECESSARY SEEKING OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES SO AS TO AVOID OVERDEPENDENCE ON COMMUNIST STATES. HOWEVER, IN VIEW OF APPARENT RELUCTANCE OF WESTERN STATES TO BECOME MILITARILY INVOLVED IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, TOURE APPEARS WILLING TO SEE SOVIETS HELP AFRICANS "LIBERATE"

SECRET

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PAGE 02 CONAKR 01044 311640Z

SOUTHERN AFRICA AND HAS SO FAR TURNED A BLIND EYE TO SOVIET-BACKED DESTABILIZATION OF THE SHAKY "NEO- COLONIALISM" REGIMES. SOVIET/GUINEAN RELATIONS ARE AT SOMETHING OF A NAIDR AT PRESENT, BUT WE EXPECT THEY COULD IMPROVE SOME WITH ARRIVAL OF NEW SOVIET AMBASSADOR AND INITIATION OF EFFORTS TO BUILD A RELATIONSHIP OF MORE GENUINE AND SUBSTANTIAL BENEFIT TO GUINEA.

2. TOURE APPARENTLY SEES CUBAN ROLE AS GENERALLY POSITIVE, E.G., WHEN PROPPING UP MPLA, AND AS GENUINELY "THIRD WORLD" FORCE UNLIKE SOVIETS, BUT HE MAY HAVE BECOME UNCOMFORTABLE ABOUT MASSIVE EXTENT OF THEIR INVOLVEMENT, AS NON-AFRICANS, IN ETHIOPIA AND DID NOT PUBLICLY BACK EITHER ETHIOPIA OR SOMALIA. TOURE WILL BY NO MEANS AUTOMATICALLY ENDORSE ALL CUBAN ACTIONS IN AFRICA, BUT HAS NOT CRITICIZED THEM EITHER.

3. TOURE HAS CONSISTENTLY CALLED FOR AFRICAN SOLUTIONS TO AFRICAN PROBLEMS; EARLY IN 1978 HE PUBLICLY TERMED AS "SHAMEFUL" INVITATIONS FROM AFRICAN STATES TO NON-AFRICAN POWERS TO SOLVE THEIR DISPUTES OR ESTABLISH BASES IN AFRICA; LOCAL OPINION FELT HE WAS TARGETING SOVIETS AS WELL AS FRENCH OR OTHERS WITH THIS DECLARATION. HOWEVER, THERE IS NO EVIDENCE TO INDICATE THAT HE IS READY TO TAKE ISSUE WITH SOVIETS OR CUBANS OR REGARD THEM AS UNACCEPTABLY DIVISIVE AS LONG AS THEY ARE BACKING EXISTING OAU-ENDORSED FRONTIERS, "LIBERATION" STRUGGLES OR "PROGRESSIVE" (RADICAL LEFTIST) REGIMES. CROSBY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SPHERE OF INFLUENCE, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978CONAKR01044
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X3
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780227-0587
Format: TEL
From: CONAKRY
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978055/aaaaadgo.tel
Line Count: 84
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 09f2b39b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION INR
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 134913
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2664263
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOVIET AND CUBAN ROLE IN AFRICA
TAGS: PEPR, MPOL, GV, XA, CU, UR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/09f2b39b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014